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happy or non-athletic. Any one of these two thousand forms can be at once tested as regards its validity by the above 'Rule for the Inconsistency.'

CHRISTINE LADD FRANKLIN.

AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY.

THE American Chemical Society will celebrate the 25th anniversary of its foundation in the city of New York, on Friday and Saturday, April 12th and 13th. Prominent chemists from every portion of the United States are expected to participate in the festivities which include a presentation of the history and achievements of the Society, its present scope of work and influence and a general review of the progress of chemical science in this country during the past twenty-five years. The present condition of the science of chemistry will also be shown, and the extent of its applications to the various industries.

The American Chemical Society is an outgrowth of a meeting of American chemists held in Northumberland, Penn., August 1, 1874, to celebrate the centennial of the discovery of oxygen by Sir Joseph Priestley. The large body of eminent chemists there assembled believed that the time had come for the formation of a permanent society, which should be representative of American chemists and their work, as the foreign chemical societies are of the chemists of their respective countries.

It was not until the year 1876, however, that this idea took definite form in the establishment of the American Chemical Society. In the early part of that year the Society was organized, and in 1877 it was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

The first president was that distinguished chemist and physiologist, Dr. John W. Draper, of the City of New York, whose researches in spectrum analysis and pioneer work in the production of the daguerreotype and photograph will never be forgotten.

From the beginning the Society has published regularly a journal of its proceedings, including papers and discussions. Many of the leading chemists of this country have been enrolled in its membership; prominent chemical manufacturers have been among its associates; and not a few of the names of foreign chemists of distinction have been upon its roll, either as active or as honorary members.

About ten years ago very radical changes were effected in the methods and operations of the Society, and the results that have followed have proved the wisdom of the steps thus taken. The important features of the present plan of organization and operation are as follows:

1. Local sections are established in different parts of the country, and the presiding officers of these sections constitute the vice-presidents of the Society.

The following is a list of these local sections up to date: Rhode Island, Cincinnati, New York, Washington, Lehigh Valley, Chicago, Nebraska, North Carolina, Columbus, North Eastern (headquarters in Boston), Philadelphia, Michigan and Kansas City.

2. The general management of the Society is entrusted to a broadly representative council which includes all the past presidents of the Society, one or more representatives from each local section and twelve councilors elected by the membership at large.

3. Two general meetings of the Society are held each year in different localities with a view of increasing interest in the Society and stimulating activity among the chemists in various sections of the country by bringing them into closer acquaintance with one another and into a knowledge of the various interests with which they are connected. The summer meeting is held with that of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the win-

ter meeting, which is the annual meeting of the Society, is held at some convenient point during the last week in December. The winter meeting of 1900 was held in Chicago last December. The Society will hold its next summer meeting in Denver, Colorado, August 26 and 27, 1901.

4. The *Journal* of the Society appears on the first of each month during the year. It has been greatly enlarged during the past decade, and every effort is put forth to make it worthy of the Society which it represents. It contains papers read before the various sections of the Society and in its general meetings, together with such abstracts relating to the progress of chemical science and industry, as seem desirable. The estimate in which the *Journal* is held in other countries is shown by the number of articles published in the *Journal* which are fully abstracted or copied entire by foreign periodicals.

The present officers of the Society are: *President*, F. W. Clarke, chief chemist, U. S. Geological Survey, Washington, D. C.; *Vice-Presidents*, the presiding officers of the various sections; *Secretary*, Albert G. Hale, Brooklyn, N. Y.; *Treasurer*, Albert P. Hallowell, New York; *Editor*, Edward Hart, Easton, Pa.; *Librarian*, Edward G. Love, New York. The officers of the New York local section are: *Chairman*, Professor C. A. Doremus, College of the City of New York; *Vice-Chairman*, Professor M. T. Bogert, Columbia University; *Secretary and Treasurer*, Dr. Durand Woodman.

The total membership of the Society is about 1800, distributed mainly throughout the United States and other portions of the American continent. Some of its members are to be found in Cuba and other islands of the West Indies, others in various European countries, South America and Australia; in fact nearly every nation of the world is represented in its membership.

It is believed that this celebration, with

its record of the history and achievements of the Society, and its representation of the character and strength of the organization of American chemists whom it represents, will not only mark an epoch in the progress of the Society itself, but will point the way to higher attainments and greater triumphs in all departments of chemical science and its applications in the New World.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS.

Sur quelques microorganismes des combustibles fossiles. Par B. RENAULT. One vol., roy. 8vo, pp. 460, with 66 text figs.; atlas, folio, 30 plates with explanation sheets. Extrait du Bulletin de la Société de l'Industrie Minérale. Troisième série, tome XIII., 4^e livraison, 1899. Tome XIV., 1^{re} livraison, 1900. Saint-Etienne. 1900.

This is a superb work on a very difficult, but at the same time very important subject both for the geologist and the biologist. It has been many years in process of elaboration, and more than a dozen preliminary papers, dating back as far as 1892, announcing important results as fast as they were reached, have appeared by the same indefatigable investigator, mostly unaided, but also occasionally in association with MM. Bertrand and Roche, who are working somewhat along the same lines.

It is fashionable in our day to extol the wonders of the microscope, especially so since the modern bacteriological investigations began with their momentous practical consequences. The medieval philosophers had not probably any adequate conception of the real meaning of their fine alliterative phrase: *Deus magnus in magnis, maximus in minimis*. Spencer's 'soul of truth in things erroneous' also finds exemplification here, for the 'devils' of which men were once believed to be 'possessed,' in disease, epilepsy, insanity, etc., and which it was sought to 'cast out' by exorcism and prayer, have been shown by the microscope to be real living things—malignant spirits—the invisible germs of disease.

But while it has become clear that these modern revelations have not brought anything new to light, and that these devils were as numer-